1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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the division of labor between males and females is regarded as corresponding to the natural propensities of the two sexes. That a man should concern himself with a woman's work, such as the sale of eggs or the making of butter, is the subject of derisive laughter, while a woman's smaller hands make it "natural" for her to be a better hand at milking the cows.

Even when the communal labor of the family is demanded and women take their place in bog, garden, and meadow, a definite role is assigned them. Usually it is the lighter tasks which are known as women's work. There is no formal taboo confining a woman to women's work. Heavy work is merely felt to be a hardship upon her. At the potato planting the women do the arduous work of planting the sprouts which they have prepared, bending over to put them into the ridges prepared by the men. They do their share, if necessary, of cultivating, but they are not generally accustomed to the spade, which like the plough, the harrow, the mower, scythe, and turf "slan" is regarded as a masculine implement. At the potato lifting they go along behind the man who turns the potatoes out of the ridge with spade and plough, and pick them up. At the haymaking, the pitching, raking, and some of the building of the haycocks are left to them. But the mowing, especially where it involves the horse-drawn mowing machine, and the building of the rick in the haggard, are masculine skills. In all cases of field work of this sort the role of the woman is usually auxiliary. The same holds in turf cutting. The men do the actual cutting in the bog trenches, while the women knead the peat into briquets and pile it for drying.

The many attitudes and beliefs which surround this type of division of labor illustrate again the socially determined character of the distinctions and their genesis in the intersexual relationship. Just as the man's work is the harder, the more various, and the wider in scope, so the attitudes express a greater valuation of the men's work within the

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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241 462 626 183 461 limits of the restriction. Thus on several occasions the authors have heard men admonish a woman for interruption with such phrases as: "Woman, be silent while we [men] are talking about ploughing." Ridicule and laughter greet suggestions that either sex busy itself with the work of the other, though in the case of a woman doing a man's work some of the praise bestowed upon surprising successes meets her if she does it well. There is also an entire body of popular belief and superstition surrounding the dichotomy in farm labor.

462 593 183 626 These beliefs and attitudes serve to uphold the conventional division and to evaluate the necessary behavioral specialization which is basic to the interrelationships within the farm family. The connection between family status and labor performed brings about an identification between them. Ridicule and graver charges of unmanliness and unwomanliness can be brought to reaffirm the conventions against the offender in either sphere. Just as in the noneconomic life of the family, behavior is enjoined upon members on the basis of sex, so, when the group acts in economic enterprise, different but complementary roles become conventional for each sex. The interesting point is the identification. For the farm family, farm work is as much a family matter as is sharing the same table.

462 593 561 Within the framework of the division of labor on the basis of sex, there is another just as great division on the basis of age differences. Though all the males of the farm family share the work which is regarded as the masculine province, there can be immediately observed great differences in the practice of the masculine technique by the male family members; the same can be observed in the feminine province.

These further divisions of tasks likewise reflect family status. They are part of the behavior expected of the farmer as a family member, and take their form in the complex of

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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462 561 593 868 the household, he has full control of them, disposes of them, drives them to the fair, handles and uses the money got for them. If he fails to get a good price, handles the beasts badly, or proves himself a bad judge of them, the criticism of his wife and neighbors soon establishes the value of careful husbandry in the son's mind.

462 593 868 The father does all the constant heavy work necessary to keep the land in condition in so rainy and treeless a country. He makes drains, ditches, fences, walls, shelters, and barns, as we have seen. As the son grows older, he learns to help at these tasks, finally taking them over. The father prepares the garden, ploughs, plants, and harrows, does all the spade work of cultivation and everything involving the use of horses and agricultural implements. The son soon learns that these are men's tasks, and he gradually assumes his share of them. The adult men of the neighborhood rival one another at these tasks; they chafe and boast back and forth over their prowess. The son cannot fail to hear and value the techniques which he acquires.

462 593 868 626 He learns those techniques in a narrow school. Where tradition is still so strong and the incursions of trained agriculturalists still relatively infrequent, as among the small farmers, there is little variation from the tried and true way. Each operation and each tool demand a technique of their own. The father makes sure that the son learns it well. Command, rivalry, ridicule, and many an adage and bit of folklore all conspire to the same result.

The father must make sure that the son has learned the right and traditional technique. For he must be ready to stand his ground with anyoné in the community in farm skills. Every operation becomes the intimate concern of his neighbors; a man must hold his head high. More important, [461] many skills are plied in coöperative activities, in turf cutting, haymaking, and much of the work of the garden. In such cases, a definite rhythm is necessary for greater effec-

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tiveness among the coöperating workers, and any deviation from the accepted technique destroys such unison. This, too, the son learns at his father's hands.

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At home the son learns that building and repairing the houses, sheds, and other structures of the farm is men's work and that the duty of performing it devolves on the father. He watches his father buy and use all the feeding stuffs needed for farm animals and learns something of the nice adjustment which must be made between the expenditures of this kind and those demanded by the women of the household for food, clothing, and household needs. He finds himself included in the family deliberations which impress upon him the economic interdependence of the family and the division of labor between men and women.

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The process is a gradual one. It is an integral part of daily experience protracted over many years. In his earliest childhood, of course, the mother looms larger in the child's consciousness than the father. The child's first duties, as soon as he can speak and walk, are to run on petty errands to neighbors and near-by "friends." Soon he is taking his father's meals to him in the fields or going on errands to the nearest shop. Until he is seven and has gone through First Communion, his place is in the house with the women, and his labor is of very little importance. After First Communion, at six or seven, he begins to be thrown more with his elder brothers, and comes to do small chores which bring him more and more into contact with his father and with the other men of the neighborhood. By the time he is ten or eleven he will be brought home from school, if needed, to take his part in the important agricultural work of the year, particularly at spring sowing and hay harvest. But not till he passes Confirmation and leaves school (generally at the same time) does he take on full men's work. Even then, as he becomes adult and takes on more and more of the heavy tasks of the farm work, he never escapes his father's

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In the past century (And in isolated regions still) most of the clothing of the small farmers was made at home by the women. Now, however, it is nearly all shop-bought. Certain vestiges of the former practice remain, however, in knitting sweaters, gloves, socks, and scarfs; and in the country districts, at least of West and North Clare, there is a custom which demands that some woman of the house be always at work. If there is no other task on hand, they must occupy themselves with knitting. In former days, the daughters of the community might gather in a *meitheal*, or coöperative work group, under the supervision of older women for carding and spinning flax and wool. In any event, the younger woman, the girl, is at the older woman's command.

Much the same content of emotion and sentiment exists in this relationship, subordinate as the daughter must remain, as in the case of the boy. But in the case of the daughter there is never a readjustment, and there is never a period of community of interest with the father. Nor need the mother fear a competition with an impatient oncoming successor as must the farm father who knows he cannot put off forever his relinquishing his farm to his son. For, eagerly as the daughter may look forward to her own marriage, she knows that marriage will bring in a rivalry over household control with a totally new person in an entirely new scene. It is her husband's mother, not her own, to whom new adjustments must be made. The implication of this fact, and the struggle it entails, will bear examination in the discussion of marriage.

Still another relationship exists within the household under normal circumstances. The relationship of brother to sister has its reflection in farm work. But it is a relationship with a different history from the relationship between siblings of similar sex. Sexual differences in behavior have made a different habit, beginning very early in the child's experience. And, for each of them, the sexual differences are colored a great deal by the norms which mark the rela-

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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602 593 578 627 and that he was trying to black them with the disgrace of it. The girl ran in but they threw her out into the hall where her father caught her and held her. They said that all the people belonging to him were thieves, and that two of them, two uncles of his, his mother's brothers, were convicted for robbery and that all his people before him had been insane, and that he was trying to black the name of a good family. In the end they caught him and beat him till he consented to sign the receipts. They gave him a good hiding.

The teller drew his own conclusions from the case:

If the girl had listened to her parents, they would have told her all this and saved her. But she went on and married right ahead on her own advice. She probably thought she was doing well in marrying into sixty acres.

It is interesting that the application of sanctions does not confine itself to a single dereliction. In this case, according to the storyteller:

[46] Murphy was a terrible lazy farmer and wouldn't even till a patch of ground for a garden for himself or his stock, and the woman's people had to send up a load of potatoes for them. They told him when they beat him if he didn't turn into a farmer and do a man's work, till his garden, and provide, they would be up again and make him do it.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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country "stations" [5] the elder men and women file in for confession and come forward for Communion first. On the road to the shop, to church, or to the fair, the young man must keep pace and the elder may call him to his side.

The relation shows itself best perhaps in the constant discussions that are the breath of life for the countryman. No work is too pressing to prevent the countryman from "stopping on the road to pass the time of day." In the rural community such personal communion is an indispensable bridge across the social and physical space separating farm from farm. In all such discussion it is the elder men who may regulate length and subject of conversation. When groups form in pubs, in one another's houses on evening visits, before and after mass in the churchyard, the enthralling game of presenting argument, choosing sides, directing the flow of talk, belongs to the older men. The young men must listen in. At such times the important news of the countryside disseminates itself. Political judgments are formed, and the ephemeral decisions of daily life are made. In all this the boys are silent listeners. It is a bold young man who enters an opinion of his own.

Second, there is the matter of the contacts of the community with the outside world. The elder men, these same father-owners; represent the interests of the community before priest, schoolmaster, merchant, cattleman, and government official. The younger men hang back, ready to be brought in when the elders want them, listening in and keeping their own counsel. Much of this we have already indicated, but it is necessary to cite it here again in order to round out the picture.

The relation extends to very small matters indeed. The better cup of tea, the bigger piece of bread, the glass of

[5] In country districts remote from the parish church masses are said in the private houses of parishioners once or twice a year in order to allow the performance of Easter or Christmas duty by those confined to their homes through age or sickness or other cause. These are "country stations," important religious events in every townland.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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476 571 skills of individual experience and prowess with one's place in such groups.

476 461 In dealing with local techniques and local specializations, it is impossible to divorce them from this social setting. The attitudes of the country people support this view. Their emotional outlook on work gives added proof of the identity between work role and the social relations it involves. Solitary work is difficult and tedious. It offers little incentive. Communal effort on the other hand has a pleasant and variegated rhythm which works up an emotional satisfaction which can counteract fatigue and monotony.

Consequently, concerted effort and hard work are not often divorced in the minds of the country people, to judge from what they say of it, from their experience of the *esprit de corps* which they feel. The old people as usual deny any value to present-day activity. The young think the doings of an older day the behavior of savages. We have already seen how the attitudes which express one's age status color one's view of life in the countryside. That is the case again here. If the old people deny the existence of community effort today, it is because they think of the zest of working in unison in youth long ago and remember the times when emotion was highest and the solidarity of communal effort greatest. And the young people forget this. Listening to the accounts of such mighty effort, they think only of the hardship and the ignorance of labor-saving short-cuts it entailed. Similarly the old people forget or fail to see that the young people go through the same experience as they once did.

476 571 Thus one can hear such a description of communal effort and the joys of work in common as follows from the old people and at the same time one can still watch a harvest where coöperative action and competition in skills is just as great. And we can know that the essential patterns are the same, though the techniques may change:

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The formally recognized artisans of the country districts represent a sort of halfway stage in this process. The blacksmith is the most important of them, through historical associations and because his skill suffers so little loss of demand. Others, such as the weaver and tailor, are in process of disappearance; others perhaps in process of emergence. It is the incorporation they experience into the habitual relations of the group that determines their presence or absence and determines whether or not their skill shall develop or be lost.

Take, for instance, the few cases of persons who return to their native communities in the countryside from abroad. They find adjustment extremely difficult. The "returned Yank," if he has been long away, is declassed and to an extent deracinated. This is true of all his behavior, through all his relations with those from whom he went. The process of reabsorbing him is slow and painful. None of this shows itself better than in his inability to fit himself in again technically and occupationally. If he takes a farm, he is better off because he is independent. But otherwise he must learn a different kind of organization of work relations, a different tempo, and he must wait upon the slow development of the relations with his fellows which alone can give him full occupational status among them. This is the reason why innovations of all kinds seem to be infinitely slow in conservative rural life. Ardent agricultural reformers all too often fail to recognize this enforced tempo of habitual working relations in agriculture and suffer disillusionment accordingly. In fact, it is the rock on which most well-meaning reforms or innovations break. Change and innovation do come about, surprisingly quickly from one point of view. But they proceed through social relations; they do not overthrow them. They come about through a new habit's achieving a compatibility with old ones.

In the Irish countryside the organization of the community upon an occupational basis can be understood not

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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231 which beasts feed him in their turn. He need go
241 to town only for clothing and sundries, for flour
434 and tea, and to sell at the fairs the calves and yearlings which bring in his principal monetary income and provide thus for whatever he cannot produce at home. These cattle go to big farmers, ranchers and shippers; and with the sale his participation in trade and commerce, in 'business', is finished except for his account with the shopkeeper (and in late years, the creamery). As you can well imagine, it is a livelihood little connected with the outside world, and now that agrarian reform has made him full owner of his holding, it is little open to disturbance from the outside.

This is the external view of the small farm. It is the view that usually satisfies the economist. But if one probes deeper and looks at the small farmer's livelihood from within, a fuller picture appears.

241 That the small farmer is a family man even at
593 work is important for the study of human be-
[461] haviour. Eight out of ten people working in agriculture in Ireland work not for wages and salaries but by virtue of their family relationship. The work a man does and the directions he gives and receives take form within a social group. That fact yields an opportunity for the anthropologist. Here, in a modern country, is an economy in which there are other controls on labour than those we know—money, contracts, individual profit. To under-

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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but you have heard enough to see his mistrust of a system which to his mind makes no provision for the mutuality between young and old.

This mutuality was and is strongest in the realm of farm work. The farm family demands the co-operation of all its members. No less the community makes its valuation of young and old upon that co-operation. General discussions among the country-people bring out this fact again and again. To illustrate by quotation once more: two old fellows, adult farmers with families, could reach agreement upon a formula running somewhat as follows:

"The men were stronger in the past, they worked harder, while you try to get any young person to do as much work as the old men now and they would laugh at you. The young people today seem to see how little work they can do rather than how much. While the old men would strip down and compete with one another to see who can do the most work."

So they went on, but even in the midst of their theme they were forced to admit that there were compensations: "It is true for you that the people in the old times weren't as knacky as they are now. Wasn't it how they used to have the horse in a stall feeding, while they [themselves] would be out with a spade turning over the garden [and no plough]."

Most of these allusions are to the realm of farm

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
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mentions that at one time the people of Inishkea were much noted for it, and that the fate of the two men, who some time in the last century ruined themselves in a lawsuit about a sheep, became proverbial, and litigants were warned to remember the fate of "Malley and Malone." C. O.[1] also refers to this peculiarity, which nowadays seems to be more characteristic of the mainland people than the islanders. 691

In the course of the cases arising from this tendency, many curious examples of ingenious cross-swearing occur. Intoxication is rather prevalent on fair days and holidays, and at weddings and other festive occasions, but at ordinary times there is not much of it among the country people. They appear to be conscientious in their religious observances, and depend much on the guidance and advice of their clergy. 181 [273] [771]

As will be judged from the extent and variety of their folk-lore, they have a great love for the supernatural and mystical. [789]

As regards morals, though illegitimacy is by no means unknown, yet, when the size of the population is taken into account, it is so rare as to be very creditable to the moral tone of the people.[2] [848]

A stand-up fight rarely occurs when men quarrel, there may be one or two blows struck, or stone-throwing may be indulged in, but disputes do not usually get beyond cursing and vituperation. [578]

As parents they are affectionate, but careless and unequal in their treatment of their children, at one time over indulging them, and at another punishing severely for a slight fault. [855]

With regard to industry, but little can be said in their favour, though energetic by starts, during which they are capable of a great deal of work, accounts agree in stating that they dislike steady occupation, and are indolent. It should be remembered, however, that there has hitherto been but little inducement to them to cultivate steady industry. The women seem always to have plenty of work on hand, and to do it. 461 181

In this district, as in many others, the people are not very careful in their re-payment of debts, and shopkeepers do not now give credit to the same extent as formerly. As to rent and cess, to the payment of these, too, a strong aversion is often manifested. 181 426

Many of their habits are not over cleanly, though this is largely due to the wretched nature of their houses, and a strict regard for truth is not a prominent part of their character. 181 515 577

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[1] "Sketches in Erris and Tyrawley."

[2] The total number of cases which occurred between the years 1884 and 1893 was 18.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

XI

LAZY-BEDS

241 IN the Western Isle, as throughout Highland Britain, climate and custom have conspired to limit the farmer's work in the fields to little more than half the year, from March to October. It is geared to a régime of spring-sown crops, supplemented since the agrarian revolution by intensive hay-farming. Wheat-growing is now encouraged under the Republican drive towards economic self-sufficiency, but it is a risky crop except in the drier eastern lowlands, and though it was the chief cereal in early prehistoric times there is some evidence to suggest that it was then a spring-sown crop. Barley has been grown in small amounts since early times and was especially popular in remote places during the great days of poteen-making, but it is now insignificant as a crop in comparison with oats and potatoes. Before the coming of the potato the oats (corn) crop was all-important, and the routine of its cultivation set the pattern of the farming year and was closely integrated with pastoral needs. In bad seasons even the oats may not ripen properly, and their safe harvesting is at best a gamble in the oceanic climate of the west where autumn is the wettest season of the year. Thus great toil was endured and every care taken in the preparations for sowing, rites of propitiation were performed during the growing season, and every chance of harvesting the crop was quickly seized. It was in the nature of a rescue operation, and indeed the Irish farmer always speaks of 'saving' his harvest. The normal worries of a cereal farmer are here accentuated, and the harvest period is so vital that autumn in rural Ireland is always referred to as 'harvest'.

241 461 Spells of fine weather in spring and harvest were times of

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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intense effort, when the toilers were spurred on by rivalries in their efforts to avoid the bad luck which tradition wisely bestowed on the laggards. The seasonal festivals which marked the end of these periods of strain—at the beginning of May and November—were not merely celebrations of work completed and a new season begun, but also the occasion for the release of emotional stresses. The Irishman's capacity for bouts of strenuous work, and his more notorious addiction to spells of complete idleness, are surely related to the experience accumulated through countless springs, harvests, and winters. Winter was a dead season for man as for the world around him. It was no time for fairs, fighting or raiding, for selling or even stealing animals which were not worth the trouble of stealing: the problem was to maintain life in them. 241 461

Long tradition explains the neglect of winter ploughing which is still characteristic of the greater part of Ireland. The infield stubble was required to augment the very poor and limited outfield grazing available for the wintering stock. There are some townlands, in the west, where to this day all the fields become common grazing during the winter, and only the strongly-enclosed 'gardens' are safe places to grow cabbages, for instance, or a little rye for the thatch. Moreover even with improved ploughs the grass tends to grow in the furrows of ploughed land during a mild winter. And when it is recalled that much of the old infield land was on sloping ground, if only for the sake of the natural drainage thus provided, it can be conceded that there was wisdom in not breaking the earth in winter and opening the way to soil erosion. Moreover the loss of fertility by the leaching of exposed soils can be serious. 241 311

Preparing the land for seed had thus to await the spring, and pressure of time as well as the uncertainties of weather strengthened the tradition of co-operative labour in the form of pooled plough-teams in the infield and gangs of ridgemakers in the outfield. The plough-team, normally of four horses or oxen supplied by as many neighbours, had to be supplemented by spade and mell, for the furrows were badly turned, and after the seed-bed had been prepared and the corn sown the seed was covered with shovelled soil. In order to facilitate drainage, 241 476

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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241 476 in the days before field drains, the land was ploughed in ridges or 'lands' some ten or twelve feet wide, separated by trenches which provided the soil for burying the corn. Lazy-beds, that is spade-ridges for potatoes, made even heavier demands on many hands (Fig. 46). A writer in the 1830s describing the scene in the fields as neighbours worked together in teams, remarks that 'these congregations give vivacity to the labour . . . and occasionally an animated shout is set up by the whole body'.[1] The pooling of labour resources, 'sharing' or 'morrowing'—there are several terms for this co-operative system—is still by no means uncommon even if there is nowadays less need for it. It not only cements social relationships but provides the [461] stimulus of competitive effort. In the north of Ireland Protestant and Roman Catholic neighbours frequently share their labour in this way.

FIG. 46. Ploughed ridges, Co. Cavan, and spade ridges (lazy-beds), Co. Mayo.

241 By tradition the vital spring-time preparations are hedged around with tabus and omens. The ploughman should turn his horses with the sun, from left to right, to invoke its blessing on the work, and when yoking or unyoking his team his horses' heads should be facing south. Friday—which is regarded as a lucky day to begin all operations not needing iron—is the best day to begin sowing, and Good Friday is best of all. The sower going forth should begin his labours with the solemn words 'In the name of God', and he should give the horses a handful of corn from the seed-bag and throw a handful of earth over each horse's rump. Ashes from the turf fire were sometimes mixed with the seed for luck and there are traditions of the ashes of the midsummer bonfires being kept for this purpose.

In some parts of the country, chiefly in the south and east, the sower carried a straw seed-basket, and this is presumably

[1] Isaac Weld, *Roscommon* (1832), 660.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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243 heads of corn at the wrong end, or they would be missed in thrashing with the flail, and for the same reason the ears of the straw band-knot should lie towards the top of the sheaf. The sheaves should be laid with their butts to the wind, for these need most drying. The bands should be tied with nice judgement, tight but not over-tight: one should not be able to put the toe of one's boot under the band when one stands on the butt of the sheaf.

[468] As in all farming operations conducted in traditional ways, music and magic to ease the labour were part of the scene. There were shearing songs to match the rhythm of the sickle, [825] and its efficiency was improved by keeping a fly or other insect imprisoned in the handle; perhaps its incessant activity was [777] meant to speed up the work. Another strange belief was that luck followed the reaper who carried a child on his back. The world of magic and fairy was close by at harvest time: it was believed that the top grain (pickle) of every stalk of corn was empty because it had been taken by the fairies and was their due. The sheaf had its share of lore, too, related possibly to its [754] semblance of human shape. A curse could be worked by sticking pins into the joints of the straw, and the sheaf might be properly waked and buried so that as it withered the object of the curse would decline. Stooks with their 'hudders' (Fig. 51) (hooding sheaves) also take on human forms, and I have known various terms for these large stooks applied as nicknames to broad-based country women. 'The last sheaf' also is known as the cailleach or hag.

Beliefs and customs connected with the last sheaf are legion and find their counterparts in many parts of the world. 'Winning the churn' was an incentive to the reaper, for good luck attended those who had their rigs sheared quickly if only because they avoided the ill-luck of being last. Stories are told of rigs being left unclaimed and uncut because their owners feared to incur 'the famine of the farm', of having the hag to feed until next harvest. The basis of this belief was that the last sheaf was sometimes hidden overnight in the corn of lazy farmers, who would watch at nights and reap by moonlight to avoid what was an omen of misfortune or death.

[787] The last handful of standing corn, selected for the purpose,

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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and houses. There is a marked loosening of inhibitions at this time. The occasion is something of a festival, of picnic meals and keen appetites, so that tea is said to taste better at turf-cutting than at any other time. After the March winds and the lengthening days of spring have dried the bog surface there is a stirring in the homesteads, the well-worn tools are pulled out of their hiding-places and the smith is kept busy repairing spades and barrows. Bright new tools litter the town pavements on fair day, and the countryman chooses his new slane with an exhibition of caution that seems superfluous until one remembers that an ounce of weight or an inch of length can make the difference between smooth ease and back-break. April, everywhere the driest month of the year, is the best month for cutting: an early start gives the turves a better chance of drying, but the planting of crops keeps the men busy till the end of the month, so that May is the likeliest time to see them in the bogs. There is an old belief that to facilitate drying, peat should be cut when the moon is waning (Pl. 9, 1).

A whiff of turf smoke drifting from a hidden fire where the tea is brewed is the first sign that the bog is peopled. If it is a deep bog you will look in vain for signs of activity, but once you have been seen dozens of heads pop up from deep cuttings and the diggers welcome a break for a smoke and a 'crack'. Turbary rights are extremely complicated, but with the decreasing demand for turf there is little dissension even when banks are communally owned. Nowadays each family generally has its own bank or cutting-face, but it is customary for two or three families to pool their labour and work at each bank in turn. The owner of the bank by tradition provides food for the helpers. On the average a week's cutting provides sufficient fuel for each family, but the time taken and the amount required depend on the nature of the bog and on the quality of the turf. Ideally the season's cut should contain a proportion of brown top turf, that is light sphagnum peat for summer firing, and a proportion of black bottom peat for winter use: this is moist humified peat which dries hard as a brick and burns almost like coal. The amount required is measured by the load, that is the load of a small one-horse cart. I was told in Donegal that a good team of four men, cutting, lifting, wheeling and spreading,

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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314 could account for twenty-five loads in a day, but, my informant added, 'they would need to be strong in the back and [461] weak in the head'; as at corn harvest competitive cutting and 'striving' brought intense excitement and severe strain.

'Opening up' a bank involves first of all the removal of the top layer of tough fibrous peat—'flow' or 'fum'—to a depth of a foot or so. It grows heather, tough grasses or mosses and makes poor firing, though there are districts, especially on the islands, which have exhausted their turf and burn nothing but the even more fibrous sods or 'rough-heads' skinned off the rocks. The common spade is usually employed for opening a face, supplemented often by a sharp nicking tool, a hay-knife [412] or a portion of an old scythe-blade hafted for the purpose. In parts of north Ulster the thin top-layer of the mountain bogs is removed with a small variant of the breast-plough known as a flachter or flaying-spade, one of the tools which this region shares with western Scotland (Fig. 45). The term breast-plough is a euphemism, for it is really a groin-plough, pushed forward by thrusts of the thighs and groin.

The bog parings are generally spread on the cut-over bog below the bank, where they give a dry footing for the barrow-men wheeling away the turves. The pared sods in time consolidate, so that the rough grazing of the bog is preserved at a lower level. Conditions vary considerably from one bog to another, and so do the methods of working and the shapes of the tools. The minutiae of the craft are so perfected that a team of diggers works with the rhythm of a machine. Strong arms are required—a single turf may weigh up to 20 lb. when cut—but experience and a good eye are necessary for speed, and skilled 'slanesmen' are becoming scarce. Great importance was attached to 'keeping a straight face', that is keeping the cutting face vertical, and a poor digger was referred to as a 'clod-cutter'. To break a turf was almost a crime: in the old days 'they'd have thrown you out of the bog'. Not only do broken turves double the handling each time they are lifted or turned, but they tend to break adjacent turves when stacked, and the stack will show by its shape if the turf has been badly cut. At the end of the bank it is customary, in the north, to leave three steps of turf uncut. They enable one to scramble out on to the

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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formerly allotted to tenants in proportion to the acreages of their farm holdings. The weed had to be carried away among the slippery boulders in back-creels and hand-barrows and stacked on the beach ready for the carts and creel-asses. The driftweed cast up by the storms of winter was more accessible but its division gave rise to endless disputes and was often regulated by careful procedure and the casting of lots, though some beaches were subdivided by standing stones. In Donegal I was told how at low tide, by the light of lanterns, men would dash into the sea up to their necks to drag out the floating weed. It is an interesting example of manorial privilege that on one beach, below the Norman castle at Greencastle, County Down, all the wrack blown in after 17th March goes to the farm which occupies the ruined castle. Every little bay where the weed collects has its wrack road leading down (Fig. 4), and fields near the shore may have a seaweed gate giving direct access. From Christmas onwards a careful watch was kept on the weather, and a spirit of excitement spread inland from the shore as the wind rose. Every bay has its own particular wind, blowing from 'the right art', for a good yield of wrack. (For kelp, however, an offshore wind was needed, because it is the returning undertow which brings the deeper weeds ashore). There are many accounts of the extraordinary zeal of the wrack gatherers and their feats of endurance. Even English visitors were forced to admit that 'it would be impossible to witness a scene of greater industry than was being enacted by these lazy Irish'.[1]

As on other occasions when men left their lonely farms and gathered together there was much merry-making and noisy recollection of past wrack harvests. One cannot doubt that the harvest of the fields, its 'luck' as well as its bounty, was felt to depend on success in this first step in the farming year. The desire to be first and the intense rivalry were prompted by motives stronger than the wish for material gain. In Scotland one reads of the great anxiety that was shown to secure the first load of wrack on New Year's Day, and on that day a portion of seaweed was laid at the doors of the farmstead and in each of the fields.[2] In Jersey the *vraic* (wrack) harvest is

[1] J. H. Tuke, *A Visit to Donegal and Connaught*, 54.
[2] M. Banks, *British Calendar Customs: Scotland*, 2, 97.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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222 461 described as a gathering of the whole people, a time of feasting and festivals and courting. That there was magic as well as manure in the golden weed is apparent from the urge to possess some share, however small, of the harvest. In the kingdom of Mourne 'men would walk three miles to be present at the division of the wrack and were content to take back a single creelful [482] on their backs. They would gather the bits of wrack on their knees, scraping them up with their hands as though it was gold dust.'[1] Here the division was by lot following a given signal—in one case a bush hoisted on a tall pole—for the farmers concerned to assemble. Wrack rights and ways of access are sometimes still bitterly fought over though they now have little meaning.

226 Spring was also the season for gathering other gifts of the sea, the shellfish and the shell sand which was carted inland [492] and even taken on horseback for distances of up to thirty miles. Prized because 'it cut up the clay', it also provided much needed [241] lime for acid soils. In South Donegal boatloads of mussels used to be scraped off the rocks with spades and distributed in creels for spreading on the potato ridges. In Dundalk Bay, Mr. H. G. Tempest tells me, mussels for the table and for bait are scraped up from boats with long-handled rakes (Fig. 74). Easter and Good Friday in particular were times for visiting the shore. Of the now deserted Blasket Islands Thomas O'Crohan writes: 'it has always been the custom here to go and get kitchen from the strand to eat on Good Friday.'[2] Winkles (willucks) were the favourite food on these occasions, but after St. Patrick's Day, they say, limpets are better eating than winkles. Shellfish were boiled in milk to give food for children and for calves. Sandeels were pulled up with a bent iron rod or a blunted sickle: in Mayo 'they are taken on moonlit nights by considerable [517] gatherings of young people, the object being as much the amusement as the sandeels'.[3] In Donegal 'for scallops and oysters, [462] when the tide was out, the young women waded into the sea, some of them naked, and by armfuls brought them to the shore.'[4]

[1] E. E. Evans, *Mourne Country*, 144.
[2] T. O'Crohan, *The Islandman*, 29.
[3] C. R. Browne, *Ballycroy*.
[4] A. B., *The Rosses in 1753*, 201.

[Text continues on p. 226]

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tudes and practices; for the islanders do not wish to jeopardize unemployment assistance and old age benefits, nor to be taxed in the future, and thus closely guard sources and amounts of income, even from relatives and friends.

Division of Labor

The division of labor between the sexes is more dichotomous today than it was at the turn of the century, when there was an extensive sharing of the same tasks by men and women. The latter now restrict their economic activities to the home, for the most part, especially if they must care for infants and young children. As soon as children can speak and walk, they help their mothers perform household chores and run errands, such as carrying messages and procuring groceries in the shops. But at age seven, following First Communion, boys spend less time with their mothers and come to take on small jobs which throw them more and more into contact with their older brothers, their fathers, and other men of the island. By the time young adolescents pass Confirmation and leave school, at the time of puberty, they are able to perform most adult economic tasks, and their labor is of utmost importance to the family.

Among the major jobs performed by women outside of the household round, and these by only a few younger women, are cleaning fish, carrying seaweed, planting potatoes, haying, growing vegetables, feeding and milking cattle, and caring for poultry. They also knit, crochet, ready wool for weaving, and tailor clothes for themselves and their families, as well as make sweaters, belts, and shawls for sale. In the several homes which accommodate tourists during the summer months, most of the responsibilities for their care fall on the women of the household. Men also do the tasks associated with fishing, farming, and the care of large livestock just listed, and they participate in the job of thickening wool; all of the other subsistence and income activities are exclusively male ones.

In the past, when fishing was a more practiced and laborious occupation than it is now, women not only aided men gut and cure fish, but they baited lines and did other affiliated chores as well. They also participated to a greater degree than today in collecting seaweed and in planting, cultivating, and harvesting crops of all varieties. Their involvement in the economic life of the island often demanded that they transport heavy loads manually for long distances, especially when they cared for all of the needs of both large and small livestock and aided in kelp-making. It is not difficult to comprehend why women are mystified at the complaints of their single daughters about the hardships that young married women must endure.

Most folk admit that members of the present generation work less strenuously than did those of two generations ago, when harsh landlords rather than a benevolent government intruded so importantly into their lives. There is in Inis Beag a widespread feeling of guilt among men, seldom expressed openly, about being "lazy." It is my observation that island men, on the whole, put in fewer hours of labor and expend less energy than workers in a typical industrial plant in America. Inis Beag emigrants who return from England for visits invariably

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561 complain about how difficult their new work regime is when compared to the
461 old. Young men are chided by their elders, as well as by their wives, about how
178 much less they labor today than did their forerunners and womenfolk. One of the
561 most popular conversational themes among old men is the contrast between
[521] generations—how much stronger and more industrious those of the "hero breed" (a term favored by Mullen [1936] in describing Irish islanders of the past) living
[562] half a century ago were than men are nowadays. Women are provoked by how vociferously their spouses complain of the difficulty and endlessness of their labor, and yet how little initiative and industry they exhibit and how often they are idle. "Light work" or no work at all is customary on days when the steamer calls, when it rains heavily, on the day an islander dies and two days afterward, on Sundays and holydays of obligation, and at other times, contrary to the state of affairs which prevailed in the past.

461 Several men admitted to me their guilt about not working more often and energetically, and told me that many of their fellows "talk big" but do not match their words with deeds. All of them questioned the need for maintaining traditional patterns of labor in light of the many supports to the economy provided by the government. One candid islander suggested that a factory be constructed in Inis Beag which would employ all of the men two to four hours each morning—"Then people would have a steady income and a lot of time off. Now it is hard to get up in the morning and decide what to do, and by noon you are just reaching a decision." An even franker man, of the oldest generation, was unwilling to agree with his peers about how hard they had worked when young. He was willing to acknowledge that now "times are easier," but that when he was a youth men often were idle and were chided by their elders and felt guilty. Interestingly, he was aware of the phenomenon of primitivism, which he described as "the romantic notions writers have about us."

Land Ownership

311 Inis Beag comprises a townland of four 256-acre quarters, called "carrows."
423 Other land units are the half-quarter, the "cartron" of 64 acres, the half-cartron,
[131] the fourth or "croggery" of 16 acres, the half-croggery, the acre, and the three-
[804] quarter, half-, and quarter-acre. I have mentioned already that the total acreage of the island is 1440, the strand and common land together make up 200 acres, and the initial division of land among the local inhabitants probably was accomplished
[657] by a landlord late in the seventeenth century. Approximately 1000 acres are owned
[427] by the Irish Land Commission today and rented to 57 landholders, while two other properties have been purchased from the commission and thus are owned privately. The acreage not accounted for represents shore areas which are useless for agricultural and grazing purposes. Rent is charged according to the fourth and is 5 shillings[1] per year at the present time.

The quarters of Inis Beag extend southward in roughly parallel fashion from the four villages, and each landholder possesses numerous fields, ranging in

[436] [1] A shilling is the equivalent of 14 cents and a pound $2.80 in United States currency.

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Figure 7. Harvesting spuds near the lake below Terrace Village

seed is thrown out by hand and the top soil turned over by spade to cover it, a task often shared by a man and his offspring. The farmer who wishes to use a plot only for growing hay usually will seed it during the spring after it has yielded spuds and will not permit animals to graze on it until it has been cut and the hay stored. No further seeding is required after the initial one, even though ten years may elapse before potatoes once again are planted. 246 221

The tools employed in cutting and stacking hay are the sickle, called a "reaping hook," the scythe, the pitchfork, and the rake. Most are imported, but a few men own handmade rakes whose parts are wooden and fitted together. The farmers substitute wide brimmed felt hats for their usual caps when haying, and do so again a month later when "pulling" rye; the hat is purported to be cooler than the cap and affords protection to the neck of the wearer when he bends over for long spells under a hot sun. Many folk claim that cutting hay is the most strenuous of their jobs on land or sea, but the men work slowly and rest often, just as they do when engaged in other arduous tasks, some of which appear to the outsider to demand a greater output of energy than manipulating a sickle or scythe. Once cut, hay is raked into parallel rows across the field for drying, then formed into cocks, known as "saving the hay," by hand or using a rake, "fork," or scythe. It is possible to stack hay into cocks 24 hours after cutting it, then to transport it to barns and outbuildings after a like period of time (see Fig. 8), but rain and the press of other duties can prolong the operation for as long as two weeks. Seeds for autumn planting are shaken from the hay on the floor of the storage building before the crop is stacked away to furnish winter fodder. 246 [293] [461] [343]

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many of them have lost their lives to the ocean. Islanders are well aware of the wide differences in rowing and fishing abilities among themselves, and the evaluation of the skills of various men, past and present, is a much heard subject of conversation. Also, many men choose not to fish because they are unable to develop the requisite talents, are prone to severe seasickness, or are overly wary of the dangers associated with fishing. It seems reasonable to assume that people who spend so much time on the water as a matter of safety will have learned to swim, but I was unable to discover a single islander who possesses this skill. The reasons put forward to account for the fact are several, but the most significant one never is broached—the puritanical reluctance to bare the body either publicly or privately at any age. Folk rationalizations are best summed up in the following quotations: "Nothing will happen to the man who knows the sea.", "Better for a man to drown at once and save himself the suffering.", "The man who can't swim will take more care.", and "When death is on a man, he can't be saved."

A recurring motif in writings about Inis Beag is the threatening sea and heavy loss of life among fishermen, with its attendant psychological depression. In the past century, only four sea accidents have occurred in the island with the loss of but 12 lives. The folk are extremely cautious out of respect for the elements, handle their canoes with remarkable dexterity, and are excellent weather forecasters. The claim of one famous writer that each family has lost male members to the ocean reflects not only his psychological outlook, but the breadth and depth of kinship reckoning and the high degree of inbreeding—as an islander told me, "Every Inis Beag family is related, and the drowned man might have been eight-of-kin (third cousin) who died 60 years ago." The motif can be attributed to the projection of a tragic world view into the interpretation of the local culture by some authors, to the nativistic and primitivistic biases of other writers, and to a common sense conclusion reached by observers who have spent little time in the island and have failed to "count noses."

Diet

The diet of the islanders is simple, and only one large meal is eaten during the day. After the turf fire is rekindled from coals and water is boiled for tea, the family assembles for a breakfast which includes bread spread with butter and jam and tea mixed with ample amounts of milk and sugar. Dinner at noon and lunches in the late afternoon and before retiring at night feature the same ingredients, although a boiled or fried egg usually is added to the dinner menu. The supper, eaten between seven and eight o'clock in the summer and an hour or two earlier during the winter, is the main meal when the family once again is united, and at this time boiled potatoes and vegetables, and meat if available, dominate the menu. Again bread and tea are served, and a dessert, or "sweet"—such as custard, rhubarb, blancmange, or biscuits—may be added. Children of school age in a family eat together at noon and after school and may be joined by their father, but his duties often absent him from one or both of these meals, and he may carry bread and tea

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361 It is apparent from the size of these settlements that some such term as hamlet might be more appropriate than village, but I have chosen to follow island usage. Within each village, no house is further than 50 yards from its nearest neighbor, some even sharing the same gable, and a myriad of paths serve to link single and grouped dwellings with a main road.

184 Although the traditions of Inis Beag and islands in its vicinity can be designated as a subculture of the Irish system taken as a whole, nevertheless there are marked differences in custom between them. One might suppose that cultural variation would be slight in an island as small and stable as Inis Beag, but [829] the remarkable fact is that there are differences among the four villages. The folk [628] are well aware of inter-village, inter-island, and island-mainland cultural variability, and they also possess a well defined image of their own way of life. At this point, I would like to examine the attitudes of the people toward their own communities, Inis Thiar, the mainland, themselves, and outsiders who visit or live among them.

829 High and Castle Villages attract the fewest opinions. The inhabitants of 628 the former are accused of arriving late at island affairs, especially to mass in the 184 chapel so close at hand, and dwellers in the latter of keeping ferocious dogs which [231] bark at night and molest visitors. Until recently, each Castle household had from two to four dogs, and it was possible for those living in Low to know when a visitor making a night visit had arrived in Castle by the outcry of the animals. [512] Castle people, like those in Terrace, milk their cows earlier in the day than do [823] other islanders, and since both settlements are located on the upper terraces and command exceptional views of the mainland coast and sea around, the dwellers in each claim that their panorama is the most inspiring.

829 The numerous attitudes toward Low and Terrace Villages mostly reflect 628 their positions in the island and resultant differential acculturation; generally 184 speaking, the local culture becomes more traditional as one moves eastward from 177 Low, the jetty, and the strand. It is often said that Terrace folk "are strangers to 178 the rest of us" and resemble the inhabitants of Inis Thiar, whom many writers and [342] scientists claim are the most traditional of Irish peasants. More cottages are [461] thatched and the indigenous costume is more in evidence in Terrace than elsewhere, and the villagers there are the earliest risers and hardest workers and tend to arrive early for events, in contradistinction to their High neighbors. Families in Terrace are considered more closely knit and cooperative and the people more [275] self-reliant than those in the other communities. The men spend less time in the pubs, do not need drink to "give them courage" to sing and dance, and are livelier and more extroverted at parties. Not only do Terrace folk believe that their village is best located as to beauty of land and seascape, but they claim that it is quieter [241] and the air is healthier there than elsewhere in Inis Beag. Another Terrace custom often cited is that of farmers using all four types of seaweed as fertilizers and setting their gardens in the same manner; farmers in the other settlements use [421] only two or three kinds of seaweed and set their gardens in a variety of ways. Lastly, the practice of seeking wrack is most prevalent among Terrace men. The freighter ran aground near Terrace, and the men there were said to have acquired more salvage than other islanders as a result of their being close to the ship and

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581 Marriage figures prominently as a provision of economic welfare in folk societies throughout the world, and this is illustrated in Inis Beag by two statements made to me by middle-aged, married men: one said that marriage is a matter of "making a good living," and the other that the attributes of an ideal wife are, "She keeps the fire going, has the tea ready, and listens to a man's troubles." Performing economic tasks, satisfying sexual needs, and rearing children are the *raison d'etre* for women according to most island men, but this does not mean 581 that affection between spouses is lacking. The relationship between most mates, 593 however, is one of "accommodation," and the affection, if present, lacks depth. It is said that "husbands and wives never walk together;" but my wife and I have observed two couples who often fail to observe this dictum, between whom conjugal love as defined in the Western tradition appears to exist. Intimate communication between mates is rare, as it is between most folk—including even mothers and sons and those who are allied through institutionalized friendship. [598] Several disputing husbands and wives have not spoken to one another, except formally, for many years. In the case of disputes of this sort—as well as those involving other kin in the household—the parties involved limit as much as possible both contact and cooperation between themselves rather than resort to abusive [154] argument. Physical assault is unusual, but that the repressed wish to perpetrate violence may be widespread is attested by the delirious response of the islanders to the plot of John M. Synge's play, *The Playboy of the Western World*, when related to them; in it peasants of Co. Mayo laud the youthful "playboy, Christy" for apparently "slaying his da" (father) with a "loy" (spade). The act which so horrified viewers of nativistic persuasion in Dublin and Boston half a century ago arouses the opposite effect among the folk.

593 Women commonly express jealousy of and resentment against not only • 461 what they consider the less time consuming and stressful work load of men, but 152 also the greater freedom enjoyed by their husbands. Many times women confided [662] to my wife that they are greatly distressed at being forced to remain home minding their children and performing tedious household chores, while their spouses range the entire island and the sea about it in their economic pursuits and are involved 829 in numerous social activities forbidden by custom to women. Some of these same 593 women expressed deep concern over being compelled by the unauthorized decree 562 of local curates, as well as by the sexual demands of their mates, to produce as [858] many offspring as possible; they complained that the constant beating and rearing of children increase their work, restrict their freedom, and perpetuate the poverty 461 of their families. Few men whom we questioned were aware—or were willing to 562 admit—that such sentiments are held by their wives, but most men cited as one of the more attractive aspects of local life their being bossed by no one and being able to shift from one job to another among a wide variety to avoid boredom. Men are away from their homes much of the time, day and night, and they do far more "social" walking about the island, visiting relatives and acquaintances, and going to Inis Thiar and the mainland than do their spouses. Also, they frequent the pubs and attend the summer *céili* on the common land, which married women do not.

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especially outside of Ireland. Four islanders have entered orders—two priests and two nuns—and have brought their families not only prestige but an aura of sanctity; it is believed by the folk that God bestows grace on his earthly representatives and on their kin as well. Even the king is thought to receive some measure of supernatural support for the period of time that he spent during his youth, as is rumored, as a servant at Maynooth Seminary.

The folk rank one another according to their ability to row the *curach*, fish, farm, knit, and perform other economic tasks, although such talents do not bring the prestige that they once did. I often have heard individuals chaffed publicly, sometimes even to their faces, for possessing less than average skills, and many persons have told me privately that they admire or envy the skills of others and wish that they themselves were more adept. A man who owns land in the quarter of another village told me that he works painstakingly in setting a garden there, since his efforts will be appraised by the alien villagers and pitilessly condemned if found wanting. Women gain most of their prestige through performing well the tasks ascribed to them by the division of labor. The economic skills of individuals who lived in the past are lauded more than those of contemporary islanders, reflecting the shift of emphasis in the prestige system; this is far more the case with singing, dancing, and storytelling, as well as with the display of strength and courage. Institutionalized storytelling had disappeared from Inis Beag before 1960, although raconteurs of note still hold forth in the pubs and at small social gatherings. These persons, and the several who excel at singing and dancing, are held in high repute. Probably the best liked of the islanders is a man of 72 years who is admired for his wit, charm, friendliness, and agile step dancing. When drinking in the pubs, he enjoys telling anecdotes about his past experiences, singing and dancing, expressing a simulated sadness at his bachelor estate, and poking sly fun at the behavior of certain folk. Although he is landless and thought to be overly lazy, he is ranked high in the prestige hierarchy because of his esthetic talents and occasional *joie de vivre*. His recluse brother of opposite temperament remarked sadly, "Even the stones of the island know him, but no one knows me." Another landless man, now deceased, who was about the same age, enjoyed high status because he was a traditional storyteller, was noted as a young man for his exceptional strength and athletic and rowing prowess, had spent a decade in the United States, and by reading had educated himself well above the level of most of the folk.

Stories abound concerning once famous men of strength and courageous deeds in Inis Beag and the surrounding region. These anecdotes are recounted more during the summer months than the winter ones, when tourists are within earshot and can be suitably impressed. Acts of courage performed by folk in the past mostly deal with mishaps which occurred to crews while fishing or traveling to and from nearby islands or the mainland. The feats of strength performed by former athletes—such as putting the shot, long jumping, and "throwing the half-hundred"—are well within the realm of possibility, but other feats usually are grossly exaggerated. Examples of the latter are the man who, grasping the base of the front leg of a chair in which sat a person weighing 11 stones (154 pounds), lifted it with one hand, also the man who raised over his head "with ease" a struggling opponent of 16 stones (224 pounds) in a pub fight.

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been blessed, to protect the beast from milk pilfering fairies and hag witches. Among the taboos associated with May Day are those prohibiting the visiting of wells before dawn and giving away fire; as regards the latter taboo, to do so is to "give away the luck of the farm" for a year. Flowers are placed on the altars of the two medieval churches in the early morning of May Day, and at one time garlands of flowers shaped like a horseshoe were hung on door posts for luck. Souls of the dead are especially feared on Allhallows' Eve, and are placated in the Catholic tradition a day later on the feast of All Souls. The telling of stories is tabooed on Allhallows' Day, and the fairies are said to spoil wild blackberries for future eating with their before dawn depredations. My wife and I invited in a small group of islanders to celebrate Halloween in 1959, and we spent much of the evening having our fortunes told by an old man as it was done on this night when he was a youth; he poured melted lead through a key handle into a pan of cold water and made his prognostications by interpreting the configurations formed by the quick hardening metal.

Whitsuntide is the week beginning with the feast of Pentecost, or Whitsunday, but in Inis Beag it extends to the feast of Corpus Christi and is known as the "kinkish time," when once again evil forces hold sway in the island. Usually the weather is "heavy and close" and very changeable, I was told, and people tend to be irritable and more depressed than usual. Men do not cut their hair, nor does anyone wash themselves, during these 12 days. Although the pookah is always a danger, it is more active at this time than during the rest of the year, and children and visitors are warned not to fall asleep outside or even to sit down on the ground unless accompanied by others, whose presence will thwart any attempts by the demon to twist their limbs. Some islanders will not undertake major tasks or decide on important issues during Whitsuntide. Whereas Christmas and Easter are considered "lucky times," the "kinkish time" is unlucky, and those born then may have the evil eye or be destined to die violently or take a life.

In 1960, Corpus Christi was celebrated June 16th—two days after pattern day and eight days before St. John's Eve. The latter is one of several midsummer celebrations reported from Ireland which mark the summer solstice. Boys gather wood and tend a huge bonfire lighted just after sunset on the common land of Inis Beag, and a few islanders carry coals from it to their homes and fields for protection and to guarantee the fertility of their wives and female livestock. A man complained to me that an infection in his son's finger was caused by the failure of the boy to procure a coal from the fire as instructed. On that evening, the folk congregate outside of their cottages and along the terrace roads to watch the hundreds of bonfires alight on the mainland coast. In the past, cows were driven between twin bonfires as at Beltaine, and barren women and those yet to marry leaped over the dying flames. One of the most brilliant satirical novels of Irish life—both cruel and insightful—is Tracy's *The Straight and Narrow Path*, the plot of which focuses on the difficulties encountered by a vacationing British anthropologist after he writes for a newspaper an eye witness account of nuns jumping a St. John's Eve bonfire.

The legends are several and varied in Ireland about the life of St. Martin (O Suilleabhain 1957:252–261). There is no saint of this name who is of Irish